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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Electronic filing will soon be available in the federal court in New Jersey. The Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts recently announced that the United States District Court for the District of New Jersey has been selected to participate in this program. In doing so, it will join the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in this State which implemented its version of the program in 2002. New Jersey will join seven other courts as part of this next wave of implementation of the Case Management\ Electronic Case Filing (CM\ECF) system.

CM\ECF is more than just an electronic filing system. It replaces an aging docketing system that was developed in the early 80's for the federal courts and installed in New Jersey in May 1990. In addition, CM\ECF, which is a browser-based system, has the capability to file, store and retrieve documents electronically. It will be available to the public over the Internet 24 hours a day. In addition, notices of judgments and orders will be e-mailed to parties. The system provides concurrent access to files as well as a host of case management and statistical reports.

The benefits of CM\ECF are numerous. Aside from the twenty-four hour access to case files, there is the reduced need for physical file space since documents are stored electronically. The opportunities for losing or misplacing files are also reduced. The system provides flexibility

to the court in terms of implementation strategies. Courts can elect to implement the case management and electronic components simultaneously or in stages. Courts preferring to use paper can continue to do so.

Implementation activities for the District Court have begun. A series of conference calls involving representatives from the seven other courts in this wave and the Administrative Office is planned. Staff have been identified to attend training, and an Implementation Team has been formed to address such areas as internal and external training, assessing existing paper flow procedures and examining current local rules.

Based on the experiences of other district courts that have installed this system, the implementation process can take between 10 and 12 months. Knowing this, the District Court in New Jersey anticipates going Live with CM\ECF in early 2004. “We’re grateful to the Administrative Office for giving us this opportunity, and we look forward to making this technology available to our staff , the judges of our Court and members of the bar,” said Chief Judge John W. Bissell.

For further information, please call (973) 645 - 6697.